

How can I best protect myself?

The following main protective measures are simple and very effective! Protective hygiene rules when coughing or sneezing, hand washing and keeping a distance should become habitual. Also educate your family, friends and acquaintances about these.



Protective hygiene rules when coughing or sneezing

- When coughing or sneezing, keep a distance of at least one meter from other people and turn away from them.
- Cough or sneeze into a facial tissue. Use the tissue only once. Dispose of tissues in a rubbish bin with a lid.
- If there are no tissues available, hold the crook of your arm (not your hand!) in front of your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- If you have had visitors, open the windows wide and air the room for 5 minutes.



Hand washing

- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap, including the spaces between your fingers and the fingertips. Ideally for half a minute and using liquid soap. Rinse your hands under running water.
- Dry your hands carefully, including between your fingers. At home, everyone should use their own towel. In public toilets, it is best to use disposable towels. In public toilets, close the tap with a disposable towel or use your elbow.



Keeping a distance

- Avoid close contact such as shaking hands, kissing and hugging. You are not being rude; you are merely protecting yourself and others.
- If you are sick, stay at home to recover and to prevent spreading infections.
- Even people who are infected but do not show any symptoms of the disease can infect others. Keep a distance of at least one meter to avoid the direct transmission of infections.
- Those who are sick should stay away from particularly vulnerable people, such as pregnant women, infants, the elderly and people with a weakened immune system.

Where can I find further information?

Your local public health authority

offers assistance. You can find the telephone number at:
www.rki.de/mein-gesundheitsamt

The Federal Ministry of Health (BMG)

offers telephone information on the coronavirus:
Ph: (030) 346465100

The Robert-Koch-Institute (RKI)

provides information on the coronavirus on the internet:
www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/nCoV.html

The Federal Center for Health Education (BZgA)

has compiled answers to frequently asked questions about coronavirus at:
www.infektionsschutz.de/coronavirus-sars-cov-2.html

The Office of Foreign Affairs

provides information about travelling to affected regions:
www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/ReiseUndSicherheit

The World Health Organization (WHO)

provides information on the global situation:
www.who.int

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New Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2

Information and practical advice



englisch



Important facts about the new coronavirus

The new coronavirus is now spreading globally. It is transmitted by droplet or smear infection. This can happen from person to person via the mucous membranes, or indirectly via the hands. This is because the hands can come in contact with the mucous membranes of the mouth, the nose or the eyes, and so make the transmission of the virus possible.

The virus can cause respiratory illness in particular. Its symptoms include fever, cough, breathing difficulties or shortness of breath, as well as headache and muscle soreness. In severe cases, pneumonia may develop.

Older people and those with a chronic illness are especially at risk. While children contract the virus more easily, their symptoms are markedly milder. At this time, it is assumed that up to 14 days may pass between infection and the onset of symptoms.

Only a laboratory test can confirm whether a person has been infected with the new coronavirus.

Have I got the new coronavirus?

If you are arriving from a risk area, if you notice you are having symptoms, or if you had contact with a person who has been confirmed to have the new coronavirus:

- Please call your general medical practice or your local public health authority* and describe your situation.
- Tell the doctor if you have, for example, existing diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory illness, or if you have a disease or are taking a treatment that lowers the immune system.
- Find out who to contact and what precautions you have to take so that you don't infect others.
- Please do not go to your doctor's practice without making an appointment. This way you are protecting yourself and others!
- Avoid unnecessary contact with other people and stay at home as much as possible.

Is there a vaccine?

There is not yet a vaccine against the new coronavirus. Every effort is being made to make a vaccine available.

Do other vaccinations help?

Vaccinations against other respiratory diseases do not protect against the new coronavirus. However, they can help avoid double infections (with coronavirus and the influenza virus).

Are imported goods contagious?

There is no known risk from goods, mail items or luggage. Objects in the immediate vicinity of sick people must be kept clean.

Is a face mask necessary?

There isn't sufficient evidence that mouth and nose protection made from paper fundamentally reduces the risk of infection in healthy people. It is much more important that protective hygiene recommendations are observed, e.g. when coughing and sneezing, and for hand washing. Those who are infected can use a face mask or breathing mask to reduce the risk of infecting others. Important: change the mask when it has become damp. Masks that get damp quickly do not provide a barrier to viruses.

Is it necessary to use disinfectants?

Regular and thorough hand washing usually provides effective protection against infection. If the people around you are particularly susceptible to infection, hand disinfection may be sensible.

When are quarantine measures necessary?

If you have been confirmed to have coronavirus infection, or if you had close contact with someone who is infected. If, in the last two weeks, you had contact with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, or you have been in a risk area. If the public health authority orders you to be quarantined.

How long does quarantine last?

In mild cases of the disease, currently up to two weeks. This corresponds to the time from infection to the appearance of symptoms. You must stay at home during this time.

What should I keep in mind when quarantined at home?

- Avoid close contact with others in your household.
- Ask family members, acquaintances or friends for help with shopping, which should then be left outside your door.
- Make sure to air your apartment or house regularly.
- Cutlery, crockery and personal hygiene items should not be shared with other family members or people living in the household. Utensils and dishes must be washed regularly and thoroughly. This also applies to clothing.
- Contact your general practitioner or specialist if you urgently need medication or medical treatment.
- Inform your local public health authority if you have a cough, runny nose, shortness of breath or fever.
- Contact your local public health authority if you need help looking after your children.

What should I watch out for in a shared accommodation facility?

Have you arrived from a risk area, are you noticing that you are having symptoms, or have you had contact with a person who has been confirmed to have coronavirus? If you live in a shared accommodation facility, let management or social services know. Also inform your school, language school, the place where you are being trained or work etc.

* You can find your local public health authority at www.rki.de/mein-gesundheitsamt

You can also contact the on-call medical service. It is available throughout Germany by dialling 116 117, including at night, at weekends and on public holidays.